

The Convalescence of Jack Hamlin

by Bret Harte

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ragous Sabbath there, an honest, sympathetic simplicity that commanded his respect.

"You are back early from church," he said.

"Yes. One service is good enough for me when that ain't no special preacher," she returned, "so I just sez to Silas, 'as I ain't here to listen to the sisters' meeting, I've kin put to the bunkboard and drive me home ez soon ez you please.'"

"And so his name is Silas," suggested Mr. Hamlin, cheerfully.

"Do long with you, Mr. Hamlin, and don't pester," she returned, with helpful playfulness. "Well, Silas put to and when we rose the hill here I saw your straw hat passin' in the gulch and sez to Silas, sez I, 'Ye kin pull up here for over year is our new boarder, Jack Hamlin, and I'm goin' to talk with him.'"

"All right," sez he, "I'd sooner trust ye with that gay young gambler every day of the week than with them sinners down that on Sunday. Ye deak ez straight ez he shoots and is about as high up to a gentleman as they make 'em."

For one moment or two Miss Bird only saw Jack's long lashes. When his eyes once more lifted they were shining. "And what did he say?" he said with a short laugh.

"He told him he needn't be Christ-

THE WARNING.



"THE MEN IS DEDD SET ON GETTIN' RID OF YOU."

husks of ranching, saw fit to familiarly accost him:

"The last time I saw you dealing poker in Sacramento, Mr. Hamlin, did not reckon to find you up here playing with a couple of kids."

"We," responded Mr. Hamlin suavely, "and yet I remember I was playing with some country idiots down there—and you were one of them! Well, understand that on one—I prefer the kids. Don't let me have to remind you of it."

Nevertheless, Mr. Hamlin could not help noticing that for the next two or three days there were many callers at the ranch, and that he was obliged in his walks to avoid the high road on account of the impertinent curiosity of the women. Some of them were of that sex which he would not have contented himself with simply calling "curious."

"To think," said Melinda confidently to her mistress, "that that thar Mrs. Stubbs, who wouldn't go into the Hightown Hotel because that was a play-address thar, has been snoopin' round here twice since that young feller came." Of this fact, however, Mr. Hamlin was blissfully unconscious.

Nevertheless, his temper was growing uncertain; the angle of his smart straw hat was becoming aggressive to strangers; his politeness sardonic, and now Sunday morning had come with an atmosphere of starched piety and soap-scented respectability at the rancho, and the children were to be taken with the rest of the family to the day-long service at Hightown. As these Sabbath pilgrimages filled the main road, the women, who were in the habit of going to the trails and by-ways, and even to lavate the haunts of some other elegant outcasts like himself—to wit, a crested hawk, a graceful wildcat, beautifully marked and an eloquently reticent rattle-snake, Mr. Hamlin eyed them without fear, and certainly without reproach. They were not out of their element.

Suddenly he heard his name called in a stentorian contralto. An impatient exclamation rose to his lips, but died upon them as he turned. It was certainly Melinda, but in his present sensitive mood it struck him for the first time that he had never actually seen her before as she really was. Like most men in his profession, he was a quick reader of thoughts and faces, when he was interested, and although this was the same robust, long-limbed, sunburnt girl he had met, he now seemed to see through her triple incrustation of vanity, conventional piety and out-

phers Columbus to have discovered that." She turned with a laugh toward Jack, to be met by the word "shake," and an outstretched thin, white hand which grasped her large, red one with a frank, fraternal pressure.

"I didn't come to tell ye that," remarked Miss Bird as she sat down on a bolster, took off her yellow hat and fastened her tawny mane under it, but this I reckoned I went to Sunday meeting as I ought ter. I kalkulated to hear considerable about 'Faith' and 'Works' and sich. But I didn't reckon up here all about you from the Lord's Prayer to the Doxology. You were in the special prayers ez a warning."

"Everybody see the Parson here got a hymne to fit ye. And always a dreadful example and a visitation. And the rest of the time it was all gabble, scabbie by the brothers and sisters about you, and 'Faith' and 'Works' and sich. But I didn't reckon up here all about you from the Lord's Prayer to the Doxology. You were in the special prayers ez a warning."

"I reckon Mr. Hamlin, that they know everything you ever did since you were knee high to a grasshopper, and a good deal more than you ever thought of doin'." The women is all dead set on convertin' ye and savin' ye by their own precious selves, and the men is all dead set on gettin' rid of ye on that account."

"And what did Seth and Mrs. Rivers say?" asked Hamlin, composedly, but with kindling eyes.

"They stuck up for ye ez far ez they could. But ye see the Parson here got a hol' on Seth, havin' caught him kisin' a conv'rt at camp-meeting; and Deacon Turner knows sich about Mr. Rivers's sister, who kicked over the rail and jumped the fence year ago, and she's afeared of him. But what I want to tell ye was that they're all comin' up here to look at ye—same as I did to-night. Ye didn't know, are ye?"

"Well, it looks rather desperate, don't it?" returned Jack with dancing eyes.

"I'll trust ye for all that," said Melinda. "And now I reckon I'll tro along home. Ye needn't offer ter see me home," she added, as Jack made a movement to accompany her.

"Everybody here about Mr. Rivers's sister, who kicked over the rail and jumped the fence year ago, and she's afeared of him. But what I want to tell ye was that they're all comin' up here to look at ye—same as I did to-night. Ye didn't know, are ye?"

"That afternoon Mr. Hamlin drew largely on his convalescence to mount a hat broken by wind and in spite of the rising afternoon wind to gallop along the high road in quite as mischievous and breezy a fashion. He was wont to allow his mustang's nose to hang over the hind rails of wagons and buggies containing young couples, and to dash

ahead of sober carriages that held elderly "members in good standing."

An accomplished rider, he picked up and brought back the flying parol of Mrs. Deacon Stubbs without dismounting. He finally came home a little blown but dangerously composed.

There was the usual Sunday evening gathering at Windy Hill rancho—nephews and their wives, deacons and the parol—but their curiosity was not satisfied by the sight of Mr. Hamlin, who kept his own room and his own counsel.

There was some desultory conversation, chiefly on church topics, for it was vaguely felt that a discussion of the advisability of getting rid of the guest of their host was somewhat difficult under this host's roof, with the eldest impending at any moment. Then a diversion was created by some of the church choir practicing the harmonium with the singing of certain more or less lugubrious anthems. Mrs. Rivers presently joined in, and in a somewhat faded soprano voice sang the first verse:

"Come, ye disconsolate, where'er ye languish,
Come to the Mercy Seat, fervently kneel;
Here bring your wounded hearts—here tell your anguish."

Earth has no sorrow that Heaven cannot heal;
Earth has no sorrows that Heaven cannot cure;
Earth has no sorrows that Heaven cannot cure.

The hymn was old and familiar enough. Heaven knows, it had been

John Colburn, twenty-one years old, address unknown, is lying in the Eastern District Hospital, Brooklyn, from the effects of the greater part of two quarts of whiskey which he drank with a friend on a wager.

A policeman Turner was summoned to a Driggs avenue corner last night by a young man, who said he had heard two men make a wager as to which could drink the most whiskey.

They had purchased two great bottles, he said, and sat down on the curb to settle the bet. Finally one man appeared to have had enough and departed. The other, who proved to be Colburn, was still there.

The policeman found the two empty bottles and Colburn lying in the gutter unconscious. He cannot recover.

Thieves have been committing numerous robberies in the vicinity of East Tenth street and First and Second avenues in the last few days. They have entered flats and stolen clothing and jewelry and have taken away many letter boxes from tenement houses.

The police of the East Fifth street station and the Post-office inspectors are making a diligent search for the offenders, but no trace of them has yet been found.

The home of Frank Barsky, at No. 25 East Tenth street, was entered last night, and clothing and jewelry to the value of \$100 was stolen. In the same building the letter boxes with their contents were taken away.

The pawnshop of Reiss & Son, No. 159 First avenue, at the corner of Tenth street, was robbed of \$75 worth of goods. Letter boxes were stolen at No. 159 Second avenue and No. 249 East Tenth street, and at No. 225 East Tenth street a flat was entered and all the lead pipe and the letter boxes in the hall stolen.

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AMERICAN WORKS BERLIN RESIDENTS.

PRETENDS TO BE FRIENDLY WITH PROMINENT OFFICIALS.

The American Colony Suffers to the Tune of Several Thousand Marks.

BERLIN, Dec. 16.—The police of this city are seeking for a young American calling himself Harry Marshall, who disappeared from Berlin Tuesday night. Marshall obtained several thousand marks in cash and jewelry from American residents here.

He represented himself as from Cincinnati and as a former employee of Senator Foraker and as a friend of John McChesney, clerk of the Republican National Committee, and said he was over here for his health. Marshall obtained opportunities to swindle by showing letters written on the stationery of United States officials.

Herr Sachs, a jeweler, from whom Marshall got some diamonds, knew the fugitive in Chicago under the name of Vernon. It is believed Marshall is an international swindler engaged in "working" various European capitals. He claims to be in charge of the Reszke's racing stable.

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ROSE FROM TABLE AND DRANK POISON

AGED MAN, TIRED OF LIFE, DIES IN AGONY.

H. P. Gaupp, Once a Rich Brooklyn Merchant, Was Described by All His Children as One.

Deserted by all of his children save one, old age counting upon him his property gone and tired of the struggle of life, H. P. Gaupp, sixty-eight years old, arose from the family circle, and pouring out a half glassful of carbolic acid swallowed it and fell upon the dining-room floor of his home, No. 23 Tompkins avenue, Brooklyn. He died this morning in the greatest agony.

A few years ago Gaupp was a prosperous business man of Brooklyn. His health compelled him to neglect his business until he was practically penniless.

He had five grown children and about two weeks ago the court ordered them to contribute \$1 a week each to his support. No one paid any attention to the order except his son Richard, who has always been kind to his father and did what he could to support him.

His feeble health and poor condition worried the old man and drove him to suicide.

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JORDAN MORIARTY & CO.

155, 157, 159 East 23d St. 207, 207½, 209 Park Row, Two Doors West of 3d Ave. Just Below Chatham Square.

CHRISTMAS HINTS—If you are at all in doubt what to buy, buy an article of Furniture. You can't make a mistake on that. There is nothing you can give that will be more appreciated—something that will tend to adorn the home, something suggestive of ease and comfort. A visit to our showrooms will assist you considerably, for every floor is brimful of substantial, matchless and inexpensive articles suitable for holiday gifts. Why not pay us a call? We are sure it will well repay you.

Credit Given--Easiest Terms of Payment

<p>Wardrobe Couches, covered in figured denim or ragged stripes, full spring seats and ideas, actually worth \$9.50; special, \$6.85.</p>	<p>Golden Oak Bookcases, finely carved and polished, shelves and large, deep drawers; actual value \$10.00; special, \$5.99.</p>	<p>Ladies' Desks, of best quarter sawed oak, piano polish finish, drawers and compartments; actual value \$12; special, \$8.25.</p>
<p>Golden Oak Arm Rockers, very high polished, comfortable saddle seats made extra strong; actual value \$7.50; special, \$3.85.</p>	<p>Dressing Tables in oak, golden finish, large drawers, French plate swing mirrors, really worth \$9.00; special, \$5.49.</p>	<p>Rockers, in golden oak, with strong, well-braced arms, finely polished; large saddle seats; actual value \$12.00; special, \$10.89.</p>
<p>Golden Oak Extension Tables, finely polished, 5 massive fluted legs, can be extended to 6 feet; actual value \$9.00; special, \$4.99.</p>	<p>Oak Chiffoniers, highly polished, five drawers with brass handles; hat box; finely carved top and French plate swing mirrors; actual value \$12.00; special, \$6.99.</p>	<p>White Enamelled Iron Bedsteads, straight extended foot rails, brass rod ends, actually worth \$6.50; special, \$3.75.</p>

Open Evenings Until Christmas.

LITERALLY DRANK HIMSELF TO DEATH